

# BAILEY'S TEAM for AUTISM

*Raising funds and awareness in support of individuals living on the autism spectrum and their families, with a focus on programming, education, and research.*

SPRING 2025 Newsletter – Prepared by Sammi Robertson



## OFFICERS

Sammi Robertson  
President

Beth Jerskey  
Vice President - Funding  
Boston Child Study Center

Trish Martins  
Vice President  
Lifespan/Bradley Schools

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Treasurer & Clerk  
Bright Horizons  
[Retired]

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Michael Andrade  
The Arc of Bristol County

Thomas Buckley  
Foxborough Fire  
[Retired]

Sheila Burgess  
Special Education Admin.  
[Retired]

Keith Duclos  
Shared Living Consultant

Bill Garr  
Non-Profit CEO  
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Paul LaCava  
Rhode Island College

Sue Linehan  
F.J. Linehan & Associates, Inc.

Douglas Robertson  
Visual Creations, Inc.

## HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS

Irwin & Roberta Chafetz

Elaine Hall

Stephen Shore

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the thirty-third edition of our BAILEY'S TEAM for AUTISM newsletter! We have included updates on our fundraising success, our life with Bailey... his successes and challenges, our upcoming event schedule, as well as other plans for the future. We thank you for your continued interest and support and hope you enjoy our newsletter.

## BAILEY'S TEAM RECEIVES A MAJOR GIFT FROM AN ANNONYMOUS CHARITABLE FAMILY FUND

BAILEY'S TEAM WILL HOLD OUR  
12<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL

*Bailey's Run, Walk, &  
Dash for Autism*

Sunday, April 6, 2025

Payson Road Recreation Area in Foxborough

Registration begins at 8:30 am. The Kids' 100-yard Dash will start at 9:40 am. There will be a special performance by the Doug Flutie Jr.'s Foundation Choir, *Spectrum of Sound*. The race will begin promptly at 10:00 am followed by the 1-mile walk!

Last year we welcomed over 250 runners, walkers, dashers, & volunteers supporting individuals living with autism and their families!

We are excited to welcome you to this very special event and we hope you will join us at Conrad's Restaurant for our rockin' after party immediately following the race!



**Bay Colony Group**  
Professional Civil Engineers & Land Surveyors



## BAILEY'S TEAM PROJECTS FUNDED

This year we are delighted to address the needs of the autism population across New England by allocating funds to the following areas of focus:

Social / Recreational Programming.....	14%
Vocational Training.....	13%
Securing Access to Care & Services.....	12%
Caregiver Support & Education.....	11%
Mental Health Awareness.....	9%
First Responder Training.....	9%
Research.....	9%
Therapeutic Equipment.....	8%
Communication Technology.....	7%
Bailey's Team Hosted Programming.....	7%
Advocacy.....	1%

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR  
21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL

## BAILEY'S PAR FOR AUTISM

Charity Golf Tournament  
at

Crystal Lake Golf Club  
Burrillville, RI

**SUNDAY, JUNE 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

This is our signature fundraiser where we provide a day on the links, lunch, dinner, an auction, raffle, some very special prizes, free giveaways... and much, much more!

For more information about BAILEY'S TEAM for AUTISM, please visit [www.baileysteam.org](http://www.baileysteam.org)

## **A Message from the President**

### **FAMILY UPDATE**

Dear Friends,

I am now officially thirteen days late for my self-imposed March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline! I like to get our news to you on the first of the month in both March and October to share our stories and also to promote our upcoming events. With that said, hopefully by the time you receive this you will have already heard about our April 6<sup>th</sup> *Run for Autism!*!

I am happy to report that Bailey is doing very well! He is 25 years old and continuing to learn new skills and his use of language is always evolving. He works at the Mansfield Redemption Center along with others like him, ages 22 and above. His primary responsibility is to sort bottles and cans, and he is very good at his job as he is a fast learner.

Bailey attends this program Monday through Thursday from 8:15 am to 2:15 pm and on Fridays we pick him up at 11:30 am. Of the six hours that he is at the Redemption Center, he works an average of 3 hours each day. When he is not working he attends morning meetings where they review the daily schedule, discuss a daily quote and he sometimes reads the paper – comics are his favorite – specifically Garfield! He also attends a communication class on Mondays, Book Club on Thursdays and an occasional men’s group where they discuss health and hygiene among other topics. Doug and I are so pleased that he is able to be gainfully employed. The support provided by those who work there allows us to feel at peace knowing he is safe and valued.

Bailey is a busy guy! He returns home daily and is dropped off anywhere between 2:40 and 3:15. He typically changes his shirt and requires time to decompress, whether it be upstairs in bed, or downstairs on his computer. He needs that time to transition from his program to his time at home. We typically give him 30 – 45 minutes and then on Mondays and Thursday, he spends the afternoon with a caregiver. They go somewhere to walk to keep him moving – in nice weather that might mean a trail at a local park and when it’s dark and gloomy, perhaps Target or Bass Pro Shop. Sometimes Sweetie brings him to an arcade or a movie or bowling – depending on what he chooses. Then it is out to eat... Bailey has expanded his restaurant choices that no longer only include Friendly’s, McDonalds and Papa Ginos. Now he goes to BJ’s Brewhouse, Pizzeria Uno, local diners and anywhere he can get chicken tenders with fries, Kraft Mac ‘n Cheese, pizza or a hot dog!

We continue to spend a lot of time at the Cape in Chatham. Bailey enjoys the Cape although there are times when he prefers a shorter visit so we are careful to prepare him for the number of nights we will be there before returning to North Attleboro.

Bailey also participates in Special Olympics and has bowled for at least 15 years on the North Attleboro team. When he began, he would throw the ball and immediately turn away to return to his seat, not caring about the result. Over the years we have taught him to watch the pins drop. In recent years, he has shown tremendous improvement and now will throw several strikes and spares in one string. His average score is well over 100 and just two weeks ago he threw 4 strikes in a row! (A “turkey” is what they call 3 strikes... not sure if there is a name for 4!!)

As of late, our biggest challenge has been his gaming obsession. Every night either on the days he is home from his program, or after he returns from his day out in the community, he plays games on his computer or his Nintendo Switch. He is typically very successful and plays until he wins. It is when he can’t reach the end in a timely way... or gets his butt kicked that his volume and temper rise. We can hear him from where we sit – often a floor above, and wait until the noise level quiets down, or he appears with a smile, meaning he finally conquered the game. Obviously this does not necessarily represent anything out of the ordinary as all of us – from time to time – get frustrated when we are either unable to win or successfully complete a task. Nonetheless, we carefully monitor his behavior to ensure that he remains consolable or is able to self-regulate before going to bed.

As he has matured, his “episodes” have become few and far between and it is the joy and love that he shows us that is the best part of him. We begin our day with a happy Bailey and almost always it ends the same way.



Mom & Bailey



Emma & Bailey  
Emma is our very special caregiver at the Cape



Bailey proudly holding a poster of him working that is hanging at Mansfield Redemption



Bailey & Spencer



Bailey at Flutie’s recording studio preparing for a Jersey Mike’s video



Bailey reading lines from the Martin Luther King speech at a special assembly in Taunton



Bailey performing at Jersey Mikes in Dedham

## FAMILY UPDATE

[Continued from page 2]

And now for the rest of the family...

Rachel, Jeff and Miles are doing great, but let's face it... it is all about the baby! He is a joy and a very, very happy baby. He is nearly 15 months old. He is walking and very engaged and is looking more and more like his mom every day.

Rachel continues to work at Aspen Dental and also works part time at Ulta. Jeff is now working at Plymouth Rock Insurance as Senior Bodily Claims Adjuster.



Miles Cuteness with Mickey Mouse Lots of Curls Happy Boy!

Spencer is still living in D.C., working at Markham, an event production and management agency, and sharing a large house with five of his friends. He plans to remain in D.C. for another year and then who knows?! He is currently visiting Copenhagen and Budapest with his housemates and is very happy to be in another part of the world. He and Lucas are still together, and they are coming home at the end of March for a visit... can't wait to see them both!



Spencer in Copenhagen Lady Gaga & Spencer! Lucas & Spencer in NYC

As for Doug and me, still busy with work and Bailey's Team and enjoying every minute with Miles Andrew... and every "free" moment at the Cape!



"Pops" & Miles chillin'. Miles & "Mimi" Doug & Sam - summer of 2024 in Chatham

*With love from Sammi & Doug*

## BAILEY'S TEAM for AUTISM 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

**TOTAL FUNDS RAISED NET OF EVENT EXPENSES: \$102,500**

Bailey's Par/Golf Tournament	\$33,000
Major Gifts	\$27,200
Wine Tasting	\$15,200
Bailey's Run for Autism	\$14,400
Annual Campaign	\$ 8,700
Celebrating Art & Autism	\$ 2,500
Autism Awareness Merchandise	\$ 1,300
Tribute Program & Third Party Fundraising	\$ 200

**RESERVE FOR 2025 OPERATING BUDGET (8%) (\$ 8,300)**

**PERCENT OF GIVING: 92%**

**JAN. 2024 RECEIPTS APPLIED TO 2023 FUNDRAISING: (\$ 6,700)**

**CARRY FORWARD FUNDS FROM PRIOR YEARS: \$ 400**

**TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION: \$87,900**

**PROGRAMS FUNDED**

The Autism Project – Conversations re: Mental Health	\$ 7,500
Lifeworks Arc – First Response Training (ALEC)	\$ 7,500
Tufts University – Adult Socialization Research Study	\$ 7,300
Autism Families of CT – Young Adult Rec. Program	\$ 6,000
Road to Responsibility – Vocational Programming	\$ 6,000
Sargent Center – Communication Technology	\$ 6,000
Grateful Mug Café – Vocational Program Equipment	\$ 5,400
Ins. Resource Ctr – Multicultural Tech Assistance	\$ 5,000
Boston Medical Center – BMC Autism Program	\$ 5,000
The Arc of Bristol County – Legal Topic Trainings	\$ 4,000
J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Ctr – Adaptive PE Equip.	\$ 4,000
Lifeworks Arc – Arts in the Community Programming	\$ 3,500
You, Inc./Seven Hills – Latin Parent Support Group	\$ 3,000
The Arc of South Shore – Caring for Caregivers	\$ 3,000
Unique Steps Dance Academy II – Therapeutic Equip.	\$ 2,400
Manchester Comm. Music School – Expressive Arts	\$ 2,000

**BAILEY'S TEAM PROGRAMS FUNDED**

Bailey's Team for Autism – Autism Family Day FPZ	\$ 3,000
Bailey's Team Education Series	\$ 2,000
Bailey's Animal Adventure – Family Event RWP Zoo	\$ 1,000

**EVENT SPONSORSHIPS/PARTICIPATION FUNDED**

Autism Project - Imagine Walk	\$ 1,000
Advocates for Autism of MA (AFAM) – Advocacy Day	\$ 1,000
League School for Autism – Night of Champions Gala	\$ 1,000
Profound Autism Alliance – Profound Autism Summit	\$ 1,000
Unique Steps Dance Academy II – Event Participation	\$ 200

**TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING AWARDED – FEB., 2025 \$87,800**

**FUNDS SET ASIDE FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING: \$ 100**



## BAILEY'S TEAM RECEIVES A \$105,000 MAJOR GIFT FROM AN ANONYMOUS CHARITABLE FAMILY FUND

This tremendous contribution was received in January of this year both as a major gift and also in honor of two very special volunteers. The fund's manager wanted to contribute to a cause that made a great impact affecting the lives of many children and adults on the autism spectrum and chose Bailey's Team! Due to the size of the grant, and its unrestricted use, our Board of Directors decided to allocate \$20,000 each year through 2028 for grant funding with the additional \$5,000 to be allocated to operational expenses, if necessary. We wanted to share this incredible news with the community as it expands our ability to support the organizations we fund.

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## BAILEY'S TEAM RECEIVES A \$10,000 AUTISM COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT FROM THE DOUG FLUTIE JR. FOUNDATION



Bailey's Team has been partnering with the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for years. When Doug and I decided to create an organization that would serve as a resource supporting families like ours, we were inspired by the Flutie family and their ability to create a foundation that would serve the greater autism community.

The Flutie Foundation has supported our family programming at both the Roger Williams Park Zoo and the Franklin Park Zoo providing free food vouchers to our patrons. Over the years, we have welcomed hundreds of families at these two events where families to feel welcome and included in the community. Often times, families supporting a loved one with autism can feel isolated and unable to leave the confines of their own home for fear of an outburst or a challenging behavior. Our event(s) help to provide a safe space for families to feel happy and supported.

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## ANNUAL MOTHER'S DAY DRIVE INVITATION & INSPIRATION BY FORMER BOARD MEMBER, LAURA STONE



Laura Stone

This fundraising initiative began in 2022 at a time when I lost several important women in my life including my own mother. Not long after, my dear friends Sammi and Doug Robertson, founders of Bailey's Team, both lost their mothers as well. It was a result of these losses, that I chose to honor our mothers while also looking at the tremendous responsibilities women have both in the traditional workforce and at home.

Covid was especially rough on women, having to balance so much more than the usual load. Many with children at home, having to work remotely in order to keep their jobs while remaining safe, with extra stress, anguish and strain trying hard to keep children entertained – all while trying to simply survive a pandemic - with no escape. Add autism to the equation! On a good day, parenting a person with autism can be a challenge, but when programs were shut, down, routines were disrupted, and everyone was asked to adapt, these mom's had it rough!

Fast forward to 2025, with autism affecting so many families... these special moms of these special kids and adults, need celebrating! In honor of all of our moms, both those who have passed as well as those who are in the trenches day in and day out... I ask that you join me and support Bailey's Team and make a donation just in time for Mother's Day!

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## *Celebrating Art & Autism*

Our fifth annual art show, *Celebrating Art & Autism*, was a great success and featured many talented artists. The exhibit was on display in September at the Churchwood Gallery in North Attleboro. We are looking forward to welcoming at least three new artists to our event this September!



Erin



Emily



Patrick



Julia



Bailey



Rachel



Elena



Alexis



Connor



Liam

## FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

**AUTISM PROJECT:** \$7,500 to fund a virtual speaker series to address mental health issues around trauma, isolation, crisis response and well-being in the autism community.

**LIFEWORKS ARC:** \$7,500 to fund the Autism Law Enforcement Education Coalition (ALEC) to provide training for first responders, public safety and emergency personnel on how to assist individuals with autism in an emergency situation to avoid risk and ensure safety.

**TUFTS UNIVERSITY:** \$7,300 to fund the expansion of a pilot project designed to provide opportunities for autistic adults to form relationships, to increase social belonging, and promote personal wellness. This project, "Let's Make a Match," guides adults with autism through social interactions in a safe and supported environment.

**AUTISM FAMILIES OF CONNECTICUT:** \$6,000 to fund a recreational program serving young adults with autism to foster friendships, community building, independence, and autonomy.

**ROAD TO RESPONSIBILITY:** \$6,000 to support the implementation of a virtual reality module that will provide opportunities for adults with autism to practice emotional regulation skills such as relaxation and breathing exercises in real-life situations encountered in the workplace. This initiative will help individuals with ASD to be more successful at retaining jobs.

**SARGENT CENTER:** \$6,000 to fund iPads and related accessories to be used as augmentative and alternative communication devices in their speech therapy program serving individuals with autism.

**GRATEFUL MUG CAFÉ:** \$5,400 to support the cost of necessary equipment for the opening of a new coffee shop to provide vocational opportunities to individuals with special needs including those on the autism spectrum. The grant will also be used to purchase a check-out POS system and will provide three (3) job coaches with the required "Servsafe training" to safely run a coffee shop.

**INSURANCE RESOURCE CENTER FOR AUTISM & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH:** \$5,000 to support a Multi-Cultural Insurance Technical Assistance program (MITA); assisting and educating families about how to access insurance to cover necessary services to support their children on the autism spectrum.

**BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER:** \$5,000 to fund an autism program within the medical center that was designed to support patients who receive a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and their families. This autism center also provides direct specialized family support, resource procurement and referrals, and critical linkages to community-based supports and programming.

**ARC OF BRISTOL COUNTY:** \$4,000 to support a multi-session training on various legal topics and services available to families supporting individuals with ASD, including but not limited to guardianship, conservatorship, representative payee services, and trusts. The series will explore the pros and cons of each option and will be available to families both in-person and virtually.

**J. ARTHUR TRUDEAU MEMORIAL CENTER:** \$4,000 to fund the purchase of adaptive physical education equipment including adapted bikes supporting reflex integration, coordination, balance, and fine motor development. Motor delays can affect social skills, and interventions can help children improve development and social interactions.

**LIFEWORKS ARC:** \$3,500 to fund a variety of community-based art classes for individuals on the autism spectrum.

**YOU, INC. (AFFILIATE OF SEVEN HILLS):** \$3,000 to provide a Latinx parent support group with sensory items for their children to be used in group sessions.

**THE ARC OF SOUTH SHORE:** \$3,000 to fund a "Caring for the Caregivers" initiative connecting families to appropriate services while also providing opportunities for self-care and community building.

**UNIQUE STEPS DANCE ACADEMY II:** \$2,400 to support the cost of equipment for individuals with special needs, including autism, participating in an inclusive dance program. Items to be purchased include heavy duty ballet barres and sensory tents.

**MANCHESTER [NH] COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL – HARMONY IN ACTION:** \$2,000 to support "Harmony in Action," an expressive arts camp for individuals with autism and their peers.

**AUTISM FAMILY DAY AT THE FRANKLIN PARK ZOO:** \$3,000 to fund an Autism Family Day providing free entrance to one caregiver/family member for every person with autism who attends this event. The Franklin Park Zoo will support the cost for each individual on the spectrum. Food vouchers will be provided for the individual with autism and their caregivers. All other family members are welcome to attend at a discounted rate.

**BAILEY'S TEAM EDUCATION SERIES:** \$2,000 to fund a program addressing non-traditional living opportunities for autistic adults including remote support & monitoring, self-direction, and shared living. This presentation is offered to the community at large and is free for all attendees.

**BAILEY'S ANIMAL ADVENTURE:** \$1,000 to fund an event at Roger Williams Park Zoo providing free entrance for both individuals on the autism spectrum and their respective caregiver to participate in a welcoming and safe environment in an inclusive setting. All other family members are welcome at a discounted rate.

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### Bailey's Team also funded the following \$1,000 Sponsorships:

AFAM - MA Statehouse Advocacy Day  
Autism Project - Imagine Walk

Profound Autism Alliance – Profound Autism Summit  
League School for Autism - Night of Champions Gala

Enjoy some of the photos from our  
2024 Wine Tasting



Sammi Robertson & Lauren Gannon



Bailey & Sweetie



(L to R) Trish Martins, Sheila Burgess, & Beth & Eric Jerskey



Raffle Winners & friends  
Emma Santoni & Shana Grogan



Tony C Award Winner and Sponsor, Joe Cotoia of Abbott Action with Sammi Robertson



Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation's Spectrum of Sound  
(L to R) Patrick Linehan, Charlie Markarian, Billy Parquette, Bailey Robertson & Datta Bapatla (behind Bailey)

**2025 EVENTS**

**APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH**

**APRIL 2** **WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY**

**APRIL 6** **BAILEY'S RUN FOR AUTISM**

Foxboro, MA

**APRIL 26** **AUTISM FAMILY DAY**

Franklin Park Zoo  
Boston, MA

**MAY 10** **BAILEY'S ANIMAL ADVENTURE**

Roger Williams Park Zoo  
Providence, RI

**MAY 20** **BAILEY'S TEAM EDUCATION SERIES  
NON-TRADITIONAL LIVING OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM**

*Conversations with experts and families having first-hand knowledge of non-traditional living options including remote support & monitoring, self-direction, and shared living*  
Guidrey Center - Dean College  
Franklin, MA

**JUNE 8** **BAILEY'S PAR FOR AUTISM**

Crystal Lake Golf Club  
Burrillville, RI

**SEPT 1-30** **CELEBRATING ART & AUTISM**

Churchwood Gallery  
North Attleboro, MA

**NOV 7** **BAILEY'S TEAM WINE TASTING**

Coachmen's Lodge  
Wrentham Road, Bellingham, MA



Watch for our next  
**BAILEY'S TEAM NEWSLETTER**  
to be distributed in October 2025



Bailey & Mom

*We hope you will join us throughout the year!*

## TRIBUTE CARDS

Our Tribute Card Program provides the opportunity to donate in honor of a special someone, in celebration of a special occasion or in memory of a loved one. To date, this initiative has raised **\$26,000** for Bailey's Team.

If you would like to donate in honor or in memory of someone special, please visit our website, and download our tribute form for more information ([www.baileysteam.org](http://www.baileysteam.org)).



### BOARD MEMBER TOM BUCKLEY RETIRES!

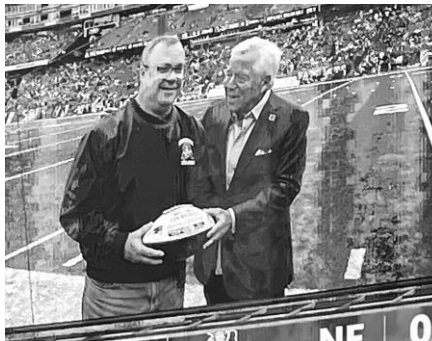
Tom Buckey recently retired from his role as Assistant Chief of the Foxborough Fire Department after 34 remarkable years of service. Outside of his accomplished career in firefighting, Tom has served the community as a founding Board member of Bailey's Team for Autism, and a long-time member of the Lions Club, Knights of Columbus and as a former elected member of the Board of Assessors.

"I'm most proud of the positive interactions I've had with people during their times of need," Tom said. "I'm proud to have been part of a team that implemented meaningful changes to the department, solidifying Foxborough Fire & Rescue's reputation as the best fire department in the state."

*Congratulations Tom!*



The Buckley Family



Tom receiving the football from Bob Kraft on the Jumbotron!



A Retired Tom Buckley!

We welcome your ideas and any opportunities or leads to help Bailey's Team reach out to potential donors, corporate sponsors and/or employer "match" programs. Please contact us to support our mission at [www.baileysteam.org/contact-us](http://www.baileysteam.org/contact-us).

### IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT BAILEY'S TEAM...

**DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME ☺**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Cash  Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card (Please circle one): MasterCard / Visa / AMEX / Discover

Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form along with your payment to:

Bailey's Team for Autism \*164 Westside Avenue \* North Attleboro, MA 02760

[A receipt will be provided for all credit card payments]

*Thank you!*

[www.baileysteam.org](http://www.baileysteam.org)

for Autism



Bailey's Team for Autism  
164 Westside Avenue  
North Attleboro, MA 02760

*At least **1 in 36** children will be diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder this year!  
Help us support this autism community by joining our team!*